

## "BE OF GOOD CHEER"

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. In this lesson we wish to examine and apply the expression, "Be of good cheer."
1. Or, as he would say, "cheer up; be happy; rejoice." As expressed in the N.T. -- 1 Thes.5:16; Phil.4:4; 1 Pet.1:8
  2. The expression "Be of good cheer" is found several times in the N.T. (seven in all in the KJV).
  3. Too many of us seem to remember in our SPIRITUAL LIVES that old saying about cheerfulness:  
*"They said for me to 'CHEER UP, THINGS COULD BE WORSE!' -- so I cheered up, and sure enough, things got worse!"* This NEGATIVE is not the message of Jesus, but rather: "CHEER UP, THERE IS REASON TO EXPECT THINGS TO BE BETTER!"
- B. In spite of this age of depressing news, the Christian has much to be happy and cheerful about.
1. Things will probably never be exactly as they should be, or **as we would want them to be**, but in spite of this, we can express happiness and cheerfulness in a meaningful life here on earth!
  2. **BECAUSE**, True Happiness comes from a relationship with one's Creator.

### I. "BUT STRAIGHTWAY JESUS SPAKE UNTO THEM, SAYING, BE OF GOOD CHEER; IT IS I; BE NOT AFRAID." Matt.14:27; Mk.6:50

- A. See Matt. 14:23-33
1. Jesus spoke the words, "*Be of good cheer*" to take the fear out of troubled hearts.
- B. There are many things that can trouble us in our day. Any who walk the troubled sea of life will have hardships.
1. However, the same Jesus who by His presence and word spoke peace in the hearts of the disciples wishes to come to us in the restless turbulence of our lives and say, "Be of..."
  2. Psa.46:1-2- "*God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear.*" Isa.41:10- "*Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.*"
- C. **ILLUS: PLANNING WITH RESULTS:** A man bought a sack of cement and, until he used it, sat it on the ground beside his storage shed. After many delays he set about to use the cement, but then discovered it was not a soft and pliable bag, but had solidified into a hardened piece of concrete! Often our lives are like that bag of cement. They take on shapes that were not intended and become hardened in that shape. That bag of cement was meant to become an attractive part of some project but, because it did not reach its place of service, it became a useless rock in the form of a bag of cement." Eccl.7:14- "*In the day of prosperity be happy, But in the day of adversity consider—God has made the one as well as the other So that man may not discover anything that will be after him.*"

### II. "WHEREFORE, SIR, BE OF GOOD CHEER: FOR I BELIEVE GOD, THAT IT SHALL BE EVEN AS IT WAS TOLD ME." Acts 27:22, 25

- A. See Acts 27:21-26. He finally convinced them, Acts 27:33-36.
- B. When Paul expressed his confidence in that which was told to him, he was expressing confidence not in hearsay, nor in mere conjectures or speculations of men, but in a specific message from God.
1. We today have a special message from God—His revealed written Word. And things will always be as exactly described therein. **Exam: the power of prayer & peace of mind.** Phil. 4:4-6- "*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*"

2. e join with Paul in expressing a confidence in the Word of God. **II Cor.5:6-10-** *“Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord-- 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight-- 8 we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. 9 Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”*

### **III. "SON, BE OF GOOD CHEER; THY SINS BE FORGIVEN THEE." Matt. 9:2**

- A. The sin of the justified believer breaks his fellowship with God. **Isa.59:1-2.**
  1. However, we can be of good cheer because there is a fountain flowing from Calvary's tide.
    - a. It is a matter of great rejoicing when sins are forgiven. **Lk.15:10, 32-** *“and so also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men.” “I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”* **Rom.5:11-** *“And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”*
    - b. Consider what had to be done under the O.T. when one sinned. **Lev.4:28-35**
  2. Your debts may not be to a creditors' satisfaction, **but your sins can be released.**
    - a. Your physical health may not be good, **but you will have new incorruptible body.**
    - b. Your physical responsibilities may be a heavy burden, **but there is an eternal rest.**
    - c. Your family may be a burden to your heart, and things may improve or not improve, but we can be of good cheer because **our sins have been forgiven, & our Heavenly Father cares for us!**
- B. While this assurance is an occasion of cheer to the Christian, the one who is not a Christian has no reason to be truly happy until he repairs his relationship with God.
  1. Initially, one trusts in God, repents of his sins, confesses his faith in Christ, and is baptized into Christ for the remission of sins. Faith (**Heb.11:6**), repentance (**Acts 17:30**), confession (**Rom.10:10**), baptism (**Acts 2:38**).
  2. Thereafter, one grows in grace and knowledge, and worships God with regularity.
    - a. He renders love and service to his fellow man.
    - b. He maintains his fellowship with God through prayer which can be done anytime, anywhere. **1 Jno.1:9; Prov.28:13-** *“He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.”* **Psa.32:5-** *“I acknowledged my sin to Thee, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD”; And Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.”*

### **IV. "BE OF GOOD CHEER, PAUL: FOR AS THOU HAST TESTIFIED OF ME IN JERUSALEM, SO MUST THOU BEAR WITNESS ALSO AT ROME." Acts 23:11**

- A. Imagine the comfort this must have brought to Paul. On other occasions, he was told what evils would befall him. **Acts 20:22-23** [*bonds & afflictions awaited him*]; **21:10-12** [*be bound & del. to Gentiles*]
- B. God has likewise promised to be with us in our afflictions and hardships. **Heb. 13:5-6-** *“Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,” 6 so that we confidently say, “THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT SHALL MAN DO TO ME?”*
  1. How does God comfort? **THROUGH HIS PEOPLE: 2 Cor.1:3-4-** *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; 4 who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”*

- a. Through His Word. **Rom. 15:4** -- example: **Psalm 23:3-4**- "*He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.*"
  - b. Through His providential care. **2 Cor. 7:5-7**- "*For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within. 6 But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus; 7 and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more.*"
2. Let us **TRUST GOD** implicitly. We, too, can be comforted in Him.

## V. **"BE OF GOOD CHEER; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD."** **John 16:33**

- A. Even as Jesus spoke these words, He was in the shadow of death.
  1. Jesus knew that He was about to die a very excruciating, painful and SHAMEFUL death.
  2. He was able to face it by looking at the joy that was to follow. **Heb.12:3**- "*For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.*" **Jno.17:5**- "*And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*"
- B. What's it going to be like to die? No human being on the earth can tell us.
- C. Jesus has experienced it; we can learn about it through His word.
  1. It is viewed as a peaceful sleep. **Acts 7:60**- "*And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And having said this, he fell asleep.*"
  2. It is viewed as a departure to be with Christ. **Phil. 1:23**- "*But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;*"
  3. It is viewed as going to a homeland. **Heb. 11:13-16**- "*All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. 14 For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. 15 And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.*"
  4. It is viewed as a new life with a new body. **2 Cor. 5:1-9**
- D. Jesus said, "**Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**" We, too, can be overcomers. **1 Jno.5:4-5**- "*For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"* **Rev.3:21**- "*He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.*"

## **CONCLUSION:**

- A. With these confidences and words of encouragement, **the Christian can be of good cheer.**
  1. One's happiness in this world depends on how he looks at life.
  2. **There is no place** for complaining, self-pity, feeling sorry for ourselves, sadness, or depression! **Why?**
    - a) **Because the Lord is always near, and available to us.** **Matt.28:20; Acts 17:27**- "*that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;*"
    - b) **Because we have the Lord's assurance He cares, and God's Word is sure.** **1 Pet.5:7**- "*Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you!*" **Acts 27:25**- **(Paul's confidence from the angel's message to him)** "*Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God, that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.*"

- c) **Because the One we depend on has forgiven our sins. 1 Jno.2:12-** “I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.” **Matt. 9:2-** “And behold, they were bringing to Him a paralytic, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, “Take courage, My son, your sins are forgiven.”
- d) **Because we have confidence we can be comforted in God (His Word, His care). Phil.4:7-** “And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” **Acts 23:11-** “ the Lord stood at his side and said, “**Take courage**; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also.”
- e) **Because we, like the Lord, have put to death our old man, and WE CAN overcome the world. John 16:33-** “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”